

THE MARSH BERKELEY PRESENTS  
ENLIGHTENING SHOW BACK BY POPULAR DEMAND  
WAYNE HARRIS'  
**DRAPETOMANIA**

Written & Performed by Wayne Harris

Directed by David Ford

May 1 - 22, 2026

BERKELEY, CA (8 April 2026) — **Wayne Harris**, co-director of the Formerly Incarcerated People's Performance Project (FIPPP), will present his vitally important work *Drapetomania* at **The Marsh Berkeley** this May. Both a cultural synthesis piece and political reckoning, *Drapetomania* sees Harris through a U.S. Department of State-sponsored trip to Palestine in 2012 coupled with his meditations on current political affairs. As a present-day Harris reconciles years spent as a “couch ally,” he draws a chilling historical parallel to a Confederate physician's pseudo-scientific diagnosis of enslaved people's desire for freedom — the titular *drapetomania*. Directed by **David Ford**, *Drapetomania* is a story of freedom, activism, and engagement. *Drapetomania* will run **May 1 - 22, 2026** with performances at **7:30pm Fridays** at **The Marsh Berkeley**, 2120 Allston Way, Berkeley, CA 94704. Select performances will be followed by talkbacks with community leaders dedicated to preserving democratic processes in the United States. Tickets (\$25-\$35 sliding scale, \$50 and \$100 reserved, \$3 convenience fee per ticket) and more information are available at [themarsh.org](http://themarsh.org).

“Wayne Harris’ work is brilliant and vital,” says The Marsh Founder and Artistic/Executive Director Stephanie Weisman, “it’s the ideal call-to-activism during these politically disturbing times.”

*Drapetomania* premiered in August 2025, receiving praise from *Theatrius*, who called the show “a bombastic sermon” and “hard to forget.” Developed as a workshop at The Marsh preceding its

world premiere, the show continues Harris' decades-long relationship with The Marsh, spanning performances and years of teaching its youth programs.

### **ABOUT THE CAST AND CREATIVES**

**Wayne Harris** (*Playwright, Performer*) is an award-winning solo performer, writer, educator, curriculum innovator and musician. His plays include *Mother's Milk*, *The May Day Parade*, *Jockamo* and *Train Stories*. His most recent production *Train Stories* was critically acclaimed, earning a BroadwayWorld San Francisco Award nomination and a sold-out extended run at The Marsh. A gifted artist, Harris is passionate about storytelling that combines his lived experience with hopeful declarations for the future. Harris was invited by the U.S. State Department to travel to the Middle East and perform his play, *The Letter: Martin Luther King at the Crossroads*. Retired from being the program director for The Marsh Youth Theater in San Francisco which served underprivileged students in after-school programs, Harris now travels extensively throughout the U.S. providing "Improvisation & Performance" workshops for Youth Pageantry groups. He is currently co-director of the Formerly Incarcerated People's Performance Project (FIPPP), a project guiding formerly incarcerated adults in creating, producing and performing their stories, partnered with Berkeley Repertory Theatre in bringing storytelling to programs in San Francisco County jails.

**David Ford** (*Director*) has been collaborating on new and unusual theater for three decades and has been associated with The Marsh for most of that time. The San Francisco press has variously called him "the solo performer maven," "the monologue maestro," "the dean of solo performance," and "the solo performer's best friend." A week rarely goes by when residents of the Bay Area cannot enjoy one of his productions. Collaborators include Geoff Hoyle, Brian Copeland, Charlie Varon, Echo Brown, Marilyn Pittman, Rebecca Fisher, Wayne Harris, Jill Vice, and Marga Gomez. Ford's work has been seen regionally at The Public Theater, Second Stage Theater, Theatre at St. Clement's, Dixon Place, Theatre for the New City (New York), Highways Performance Space (Los Angeles), and Woolly Mammoth Theatre Company (Washington, D.C.). His work has also been featured in most of the fringe festivals in North America, and at theaters around the Bay Area including Berkeley Repertory Theatre, the Magic Theatre, and Marin Theatre. Ford's directing has garnered several "Best of Fringe" Awards and a Goldie Award.

### **ABOUT THE MARSH**

**The Marsh** is known as "a breeding ground for new performance." Launched in 1989 by Founder and Artistic Director Stephanie Weisman, it annually hosts more than 500 performances across the company's two venues in San Francisco and Berkeley. A leading outlet for solo performers, The Marsh's specialty has been hailed by the *San Francisco Chronicle* as "solo performances that celebrate the power of storytelling at its simplest and purest." *The East Bay Times* named The Marsh one of the Bay Area's best intimate theaters, calling it "one of the most thriving solo theaters in the nation. The live theatrical energy is simply irresistible." In April 2020, The Marsh launched its digital platform MarshStream and hosted more than 700 live streams which provided 300 performers and its youth class participants a platform to continue discovering, developing, and producing art during the COVID-19 pandemic shutdown. Today,

The Marsh presents both in-person live performances and content on its MarshStream, continuing to expand its reach to audiences onsite and around the world. The Marsh believes in the power of people’s storytelling and has several classes for the public to create their own works as well as through its developing work performance series: Monday Night Marsh, Tell It on Tuesday, and Marsh Risings. The theater company also collaborates with over 20 San Francisco public schools providing a year-round youth program serving students at its theater and in the classrooms.

**FOR CALENDAR EDITORS:**

**WHAT:** **Wayne Harris**, co-director of the Formerly Incarcerated People’s Performance Project (FIPPP), will present his vitally important work ***Drapetomania*** at **The Marsh Berkeley** this May. Both a cultural synthesis piece and political reckoning, ***Drapetomania*** sees Harris through a U.S. Department of State-sponsored trip to Palestine in 2012 coupled with his meditations on current political affairs. As a present-day Harris reconciles years spent as a “couch ally,” he draws a chilling historical parallel to a Confederate physician’s pseudo-scientific diagnosis of enslaved people’s desire for freedom — the titular *drapetomania*. Directed by **David Ford**, ***Drapetomania*** is a story of freedom, activism, and engagement.

**WHEN:** **May 1 – 22, 2026**

**SHOWS:** **7:30pm Fridays**

**WHERE:** **The Marsh Berkeley, 2120 Allston Way, Berkeley**  
*Parking: Allston Way Garage, 2061 Allston Way between Milvia & Shattuck.*  
*BART station (closest): Downtown Berkeley BART*

**TICKETS:** \$25-\$35 general admission, \$50 and \$100 reserved, \$3 convenience fee per ticket

**INFO:** For information, the public may visit [themarsh.org](http://themarsh.org).

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**PRESS:** Contact Raymond Harris, CBCO Public Relations & Marketing  
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**PHOTOS:** Downloadable high-res photos are available here:  
<https://cbpr.co/press/drapetomania>